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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION:
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Miss Maymouna Diop (Senegal), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.33

Specific measures in favour of island developing countries

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that, in addition to the general problems facing developing countries, many island developing countries experience handicaps arising from the interplay of such factors as their smallness, remoteness, geographical dispersion, vulnerability to natural disasters, the fragility of their ecosystems, constraints on transport and communications, great distances from market centres, a highly limited internal market, lack of natural resources, weak indigenous technological capacity, the acute problem of obtaining freshwater supplies, heavy dependence on imports and a small number of commodities, depletion of non-renewable resources, migration, particularly of personnel with high-level skills, shortages of administrative personnel and heavy financial burdens,

Recognizing also that many of these factors occur concurrently in island developing countries, resulting in economic and social vulnerability and dependence, particularly in those countries which are small and/or geographically dispersed,

Noting that many island developing countries are least developed countries,

Mindful of the fact that island developing countries are facing an international economic environment in the 1990s which may strongly affect their ability to achieve sustainable development, particularly in small island developing countries which have extremely open and volatile economies,

Concerned about the adverse effects on island developing countries of sealevel rise resulting from climate change,

Taking note of Agenda 21, which was adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1/ in particular chapter 17, section G, relating to the sustainable development of small island developing States,

Welcoming the decision to convene a global conference on the sustainable development of small island developing States in 1994,

1. Reaffirms its resolution 45/202 of 21 December 1990 and other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and calls for their immediate and effective implementation;

2. Expresses its appreciation to States and to organizations and bodies within and outside the United Nations system that have responded to the special needs of island developing countries;

3. Welcomes the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in convening a meeting of the Group of Experts on Island Developing Countries in Geneva on 15 and 16 July 1992;

4. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the specific problems and needs of island developing countries; 2/

5. Welcomes the efforts made by island developing countries to adopt policies that address their specific problems, including efforts at regional cooperation and integration, and calls upon those countries to continue to pursue, in accordance with their national objectives, policies and priorities, further measures to increase their international competitiveness, to render their economies less vulnerable by developing the capacity to respond to shocks due to natural disasters and external economic changes, and to promote sustainable development;

6. Appeals to the international community:

1/ See A/CONF.151/26 (Vols. I, II and Corr.1 and III).

2/ A/47/414 and Add.1.

(a) To maintain and, if possible, increase the level of concessional financial and technical assistance provided to island developing countries;

(b) To optimize access of island developing countries to concessional financial and technical assistance by taking into account, inter alia, the specific development needs and problems facing those countries;

(c) To consider reviewing the mechanisms of existing procedures used in providing concessional resources to island developing countries, taking into account their situations and development potential;

(d) To ensure that assistance conforms to the national and, as appropriate, regional priorities of island developing countries;

(e) To provide support to island developing countries over a mutually agreed and, where appropriate, longer time-frame to enable them to achieve economic growth and development;

(f) To consider improving trade and/or other existing arrangements for assisting island developing countries in redressing adverse effects on their export earnings and to consider wider adoption of such arrangements;

(g) To continue to ensure that a concerted effort is made to assist island developing countries, at their request, in improving their institutional and administrative capacities and in satisfying their overall needs with regard to the development of human resources;

(h) To provide assistance, where appropriate, to island developing countries to mitigate the consequences of climate change and sealevel rise;

7. Invites island developing countries to intensify further their regional and subregional cooperative arrangements, particularly to address the problem of high-cost economies, by developing, where appropriate, common services to reduce the high per capita costs of infrastructure and public services and by developing regional transport and communications systems;

8. Urges once again relevant organizations of the United Nations system to take adequate measures to respond positively to the particular needs of island developing countries and continue to report on such measures through the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, as appropriate;

9. Urges the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to strengthen its role within its mandate as the focal point for specific action at the global level in favour of island developing countries and to act as a catalyst in this regard, inter alia, by organizing and facilitating the cross-regional interchange of information and experience in full cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, both within and outside the United Nations system, as appropriate;

10. Requests the Secretary-General, taking into account work already done on this issue, as well as that provided for in the context of the preparation for and follow-up to the global conference on the sustainable development of small island developing States, to continue to monitor and review in a coordinated manner, inter alia, within the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development and the secretariats of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the problems of island developing countries, in particular those of small island developing countries;

11. Also requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution.